

# NEW THINGS STRANGE & CURIOUS

## TALKING TO LARGEST FROG IN WORLD.



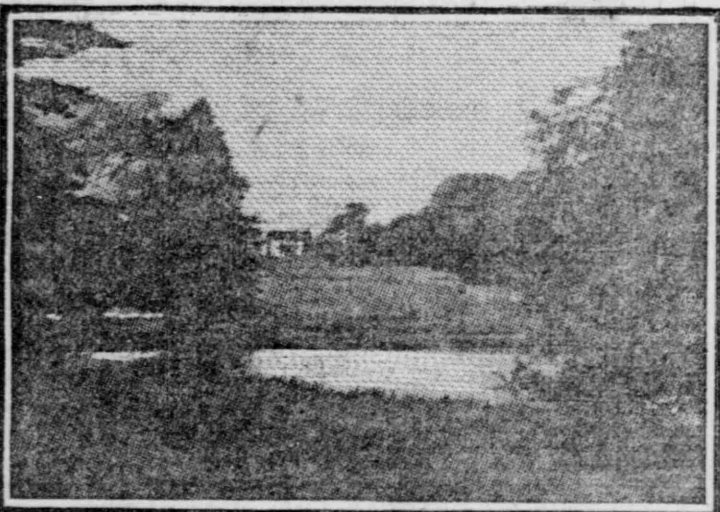
The biggest frog in the world belonged to Chancey Coleman, a hotel proprietor in Fredericton, N. B. As a matter of fact, he still belongs to Mr. Coleman, but is now stuffed and in a glass case, having gone to the happy hunting grounds for frogs some time ago. The frog was born and brought up on Mr. Coleman's farm at Killarney, a few miles from Fredericton.

He was like all other frogs at first, but soon began to assume unusually large proportions. Mr. Coleman fed him on the fat of the land, and eventually he attained a weight of seventeen pounds

and measured twenty-seven inches in length and fifteen in breadth. He learned a lot of tricks, too. He always answered a summons to dinner promptly and could jump over a barrier eighteen inches high. If he had not passed away, Mr. Coleman is convinced that he could have been taught to sing and waliz.

Although the first vessel passed through the Suez Canal in 1869, it was not formally opened until 1869. The British government receives £814,766 yearly upon the Suez Canal shares it owns. These it bought for just under four mil-

## SCENE OF MR. PICKWICK'S SLIDING.



At last the pond scene of Mr. Pickwick's sliding on the ice, located by Charles Dickens at the Manor Farm, Muggleton, has been discovered and photographed by Dickens enthusiasts, the name of the place being Cob Tree, Sandling, England.

Not above two miles from Muggleton, we are informed in Chapter VII of "Pickwick Papers," was Manor Farm, the residence of that delightful host, Mr. Wardle, or "Old Wardle," as he was more familiarly termed. The zealous enthusiast in Dickens matters has decided that Sandling stood for Dingley Dell and that Cob Tree was the original of Manor Farm, so admirably depicted by Phiz.

The pond which on that particular morning had been converted into "a pretty large sheet of ice" was in existence long before "The Pickwick Papers" were written, so that any idea that an ardent devotee of the great novelist constructed the pond to fit Phiz's picture is readily dismissed.

Inside Cob Tree is found just such a kitchen as Dickens described, and which figures so conspicuously in the account of the Christmas festivities at Manor Farm.

Britain's national expenditure passed the one hundred million point in 1897. It was one hundred and eighty-three and a half millions last year.

## THE ICON, OR HOLY PICTURE.



In the Greek church the icon is an important feature. It is an image or representation of Christ, the Virgin or a saint in painting, relief or mosaic. The ordinary ones are decorated in enamel or niello work. The more expensive ones in some of the cathedrals and homes of the better classes are often decorated with jewels of great value.

There are always two icons at least in a Greek church—one of Christ and the holy doors, as one faces the bema, and one of Theotokos on the left. They are frequently used as votive offerings, and most churches are possessed of a large number of them.

Icons are honored with a relative worship or adoration, manifested by offerings of incense and lights, but they are

not supposed to receive the supreme worship of God.

The ignorant Russian peasant usually carries a small one in a folding tablet of wood, secreted in the folds of his gown. All over the public highways of Russia there are wayside shrines containing a St. Christopher, or Virgin and Holy Child, or other saint.

In the trains there is usually a car, or portion of one, set apart for the icon shrine, that the wayfarer need never have an excuse for not attending to his devotions.

In the majority of homes the icon is placed on the wall or a shelf directly opposite the door, and all visitors walk to it at once and pay their devotions before greeting host or hostess.

## Trick With Matches.

In a plate or basin filled with water place eight matches in the form of a star, as shown in the accompanying picture, taking care that only the lower part of each match will become wet, and next prepare a magician's wand in such a manner that it will resemble a short ebony staff with two ivory tips.

A suitable ebony staff can be made by putting a coat of black varnish on a small tin tube, and as substitutes for the ivory tips a small cylindrical piece of soap and another of sugar must be



used. Seeing these white objects at the two ends of the staff, the audience can readily be made to believe that they are ivory tips.

If you want the matches to come together, all that is necessary is to dip the sugar-tipped end of the wand in the water about the center of the star, for the sugar will at once begin to draw the water into its pores, and naturally the matches will crowd together in the same direction. On the other hand, if you want the matches to move away from each other, all that is necessary is to dip the soap-tipped end of the wand in the water, for the soap will at once begin to melt and the water, thrust back at the fat which has gathered on its surface, will naturally break up the starlike formation and drive the matches in various directions.

This is an amusing trick and one which never fails to create a great deal of surprise.

## Belonged to Cromwell.

That Oliver Cromwell loved ornament and luxury is evidenced in a collection of silver which belonged to him at the height of his power and which was re-



cently sold in England. Here are two pieces—a silver gilt spoon and fork—which are said to have been highly prized by the Lord Protector.

## Cannot Kill Himself.

In Vienna there is a man who has made forty different attempts to kill himself and has not yet succeeded. According to the Austrian press, no other man who is still living has tried so hard to get out of the world as he has. That he will finally succeed in killing himself is very probable, as he says that nothing would induce him to remain alive much longer. Indeed, he has gravely informed the chief of police that he "would much sooner die than give a pledge that he would stop trying to commit suicide."

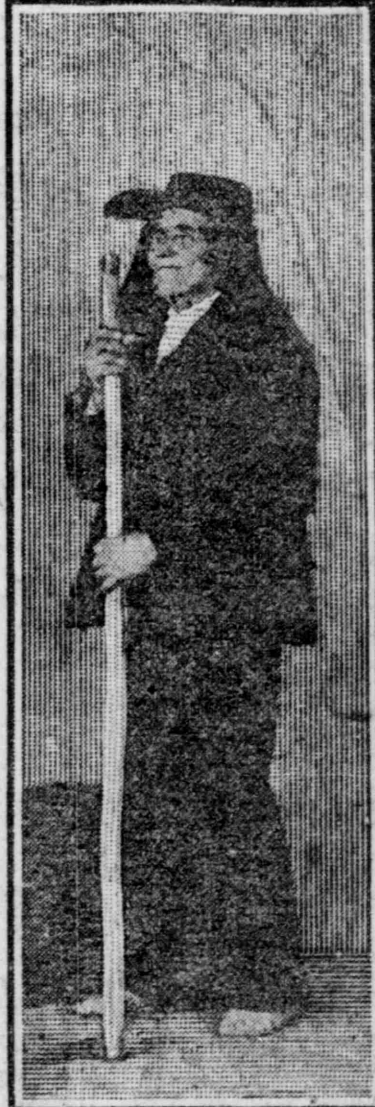
## MEN WORK TO SAVE THEIR HORSES.

Evidently there is one place where there is little need of a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and that is Jersey. The farmers there are so careful of their horses that they do not work them more than is absolutely necessary, and frequently do work which is done elsewhere by horses.

If a farmer has to plow a heavy piece of ground he is obliged to use his team, but if the ground which is to be broken up is light it is very probable that he will take the place of a horse,

## Odd Costumes of Azores.

The peasant dress of the Azores is peculiar and typical. That worn by the men consists of a suit of homespun cotton flax or woolen stuff and hat made



of the same material. The cap is called carapuca and is fast disappearing. It is of unusual form, having a crescent shaped brim made of stiff cardboard, six inches in width, while behind hangs a cape to protect the neck from heat or cold. When the cape is not needed it is rolled up on the top of the cap and presents a very comical appearance.

## Big Profit-Sharing Plan.

On New Year Day the biggest steel combine in America announced to the world its great profit-sharing plan, devised by George W. Perkins, to promote co-operation in this great industry. The property of the company includes mines from which is taken nearly one-half of the total production of iron ore in the United States, the greatest American fleet, and the sixth in size in the world, and 1,500 miles of railroad to carry the ore to the furnaces; 90,000 acres of coal fields nearby for fuel to help turn out 9,000,000 tons of pig-iron a year, and big steel mills from which come yearly more than 9,000,000 tons of steel, 1,000,000 tons of rods, 100,000,000 feet of tubes and more than 12,000,000 kegs of nails, and most of the woven wire and tin-plate in America.

Its capital amounts to a total of nearly one and one-half billion dollars. Its employees number more than 168,000 men—greater than the combined forces of Meade and Lee at Gettysburg.

## KING CHARLES I WORE THIS COLLAR.



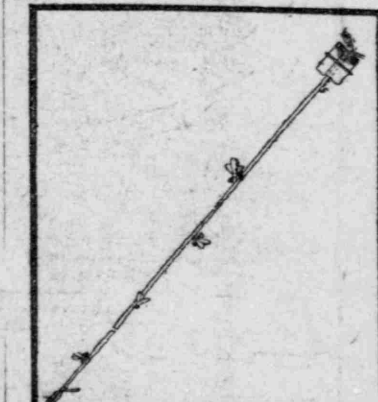
In the accompanying picture is shown a beautiful lace collar, which was once the property of King Charles I of England.

Though many decades have passed since the Stuarts ceased to reign over England, there are few Englishmen who are not interested in them and their history and for this reason hardly any book of the day is more talked about in

## Novel Fly Trap.

In the accompanying picture is shown a curious device for catching flies, which has just been invented and which is said to work admirably by those who have tested it.

Its principal part is a vessel which is intended to hold paste and the sides of which are provided with longitudinal slots. Over the open part of the vessel is a cover and through the slots a cord runs. The open ends of the slots can also be covered, and attached to the vessel is a flexible wire, which is

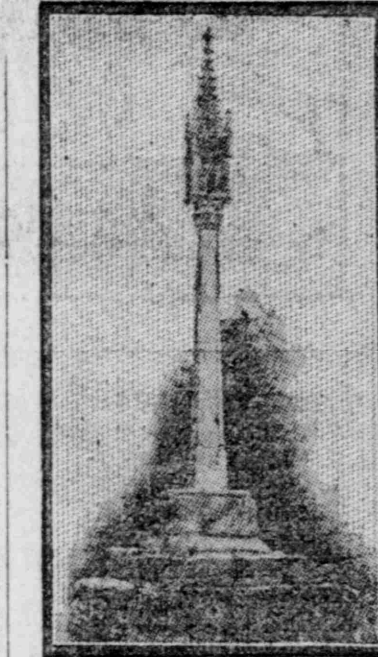


used in the following manner: When not in use, can be wrapped around the outside of the vessel, and thus in winter, when it is not needed, the trap occupies very little room.

## Romance of a Cross.

In the fifteenth century a beautiful cross stood in the village of Shillingstone, in England. When the Puritans came into power well befell it, and soon all that was left was a few inches of the tall shaft and the square steps on which the cross had rested. In 1892 Mrs. Kyrie Chapman resolved to restore the ancient emblem to its original form and gave the necessary instructions to two well-known sculptors, the result being that the finished work was ready in their studios ten years ago.

Then trouble began. Several persons residing near Shillingstone got the no-



tion into their heads that there was something very suggestive of Popery in the beautiful cross, and they raised so many objections that no attempt was made to erect it. For years the opposing element refused to listen to any arguments, but finally it gave way, and a few days ago the cross was erected and was solemnly consecrated by the Bishop of Salisbury.

## BOB, ATHLETIC DOG, PUNCHING THE BAG.



Bob enjoys this exercise very much. He is a great dog to catch cats and chickens, and so has to be tied up most of the time. After he has "punched" the bag for ten minutes he knows he has been doing something. He some-

times jumps three feet from the ground, and the higher the bag the more he enjoys the sport.

The United States has still 1,100,000 square miles of woodland, or about 37 per cent of her total territory.

## STOLEN BY GYPSIES.

In the village of Frank, in Hungary, several mothers are now bemoaning the loss of their little ones. A few weeks ago, it seems, a band of gypsies came to the village, and in the evening gave a performance, in which half a dozen trained bears and monkeys were the principal actors. Very soon after it was over it was discovered that seven chil-

dren had disappeared, and abundant proof was soon forthcoming that they had been carried off by the gypsies. Immediately the district was searched for them, but they were not found, and no trace of them has yet been discovered. The search, however, is still being continued, for the parents of the children are prominent and wealthy and are spending money freely.

## ONLY MARSUPIAL WOLF IN AMERICA.



Here is a queer animal. One might take it for a dog offhand, but it is really a wolf. It is not like ordinary wolves, however, being a marsupial, from Australia. In that country are found marsupial rats, marsupial cats and various other creatures of the same order, which

carry their young in pouches, like kangaroos, which, of course, are marsupials. This is the first marsupial wolf that was ever brought to this country, and it is now in a cage at the Washington Zoo, where it was photographed. It is quite fierce and has two pups.

## Habits and Peculiarities of Mosquitoes.

ACCORDING to a European traveler, the porters and other employees in the principal hotels on the Continent have discovered a very simple method of letting each other know whether or not they are likely to receive tips from those who frequent their hotels. They communicate with each other by means of the labels which are attached to all luggage when it is taken away from hotels. The code which they use is complete in its way. If a label is at-

tached to one corner of a trunk it means that the owner of the trunk is a charitable soul and never forgets to tip those who do him even a trifling service; if it is attached to another corner it indicates that the owner is close-fisted and that any time spent in attending on him will be wasted.

This novel code, says the European traveler, is now thoroughly understood in all the large hotels, and as a result the labels on the luggage of every tourist are carefully examined as soon as it arrives.

## WHALE'S TOOTH FOR A TREATY.

Treaties between nations often take queer shapes, and Uncle Sam's collection of agreements with foreign powers, carefully preserved at the Department of State, is very interesting. Some of the seals attached to documents are enclosed in boxes of silver six or eight inches in diameter, while the most recent treaty with China is bound in yellow silk—the royal color in that country.

But the queerest of all the treaties kept in the Government archives is a whale's tooth, which was sent to the President of the United States by the King of the Fiji Islands about twenty years ago, as a bond for the performance of certain obligations of an international kind.



## Pope's School Books.

Count Capogrossi-Guarna, a well-known collector of rare books, purchased some time ago at auction in Italy a copy of "Virgil," which was published in 1880, and a volume containing selections from Cicero's works, which also appeared about the same date. As very few copies of these editions can now be obtained, he was delighted at being able to secure these two treasures, but he was more pleased when, on examining them, he found that the margins contained several notes written by Joachim Pecci during his schoolboy days.

This assiduous schoolboy subsequently became Pope Leo XIII, and Count Capogrossi-Guarna, feeling sure that the gift would be appreciated, resolved to make him a present of the two old books. He therefore gave them to a noted binder, with instructions to put new covers on them, but in such a manner that the original notes would not be marred in the slightest degree, and when the work was done he sent the books to the Pope. The latter was delighted when he received them, and as a token of his gratitude he conferred the grand cross of the Order of St. Gregory on the thoughtful count.

In the Tamarack Copper Mine a plumb line 4,233 feet long, of plain wire, was recently lowered from the shaft mouth. It took thirty minutes to drop and is probably the longest plumb line ever used.

